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ABSTRACT

This digest presents recommendations for a staff development program for a multilingual multicultural teaching staff that has been tested and shown to be effective. Effective instruction in bilingual and multicultural schools requires that teachers combine a sophisticated knowledge of subject matter with a wide repertoire of teaching strategies and state-of-the-art knowledge about learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, curriculum, technology, assessment, and programs that work. Researchers at the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk have gained insight into ways of bringing instruction, cultural relevance, and equitable power relations into a staff development program. The Teachers' Learning Communities (TLC) program that the Center has developed is based on the belief that all teachers can participate successfully in educational reform. At TLC sessions teachers meet for general group activities that review teaching techniques and educational theory and they participate in ethnographic activities that consider the following: (1) overall student learning; (2) bilingual instruction; (3) instruction in language minority schools; (4) individual teacher practices; (5) team teaching; and (6) relationships among teachers. Having the TLC structure in place at the school site gives teachers opportunities for meaningful peer coaching and for collaborative reflection that empowers teachers and promotes student achievement. (Contains 17 references.) (SLD)

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ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON URBAN EDUCATION

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STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN MULTILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS

It is estimated that by the turn of the century up to 40 percent of the children in the nation's classrooms will be non-white, with the majority Latino (Valencia, 1996). Already, multilingual multicultural schools exist in practically every major city. Since the teaching force is primarily white, and becoming even more so, it is important to take immediate action to prepare teachers and principals to work with a student population different from themselves. Yet, professional development activities in schools still shy away from tackling inequity, prejudice, and bias, although experience shows that their existence negatively affects instruction, curriculum, teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships, and even teacher-teacher relations.

Creators of staff development programs must understand what reform means locally in order to gain insight into how professional development for the reforms can be made relevant and sustained. They must consider how the dominant culture of a school (whether it is a "white" or "minority" culture) can halt all reform efforts so that nothing, particularly people, fundamentally changes. When this happens, staff development programs must take up the dual task of developing new expertise in teachers, and also addressing how inequalities, power, racism, or *laissez-faire* attitudes are rooted in the school's basic institutional structures. Indeed, school reform itself must make solving these problems—along with instituting communities of genuine collaboration, caring, and justice—fundamental forces driving their missions and action plans.

This digest presents recommendations for a staff development program for a multilingual multicultural teaching staff based on a model that has been tested and shown to be effective.

Historical Disempowerment of Bilingual/Minority Teachers and Students

For the past 25 years, the education of language minority students has been mainly addressed by short-term federally funded programs specializing in providing variations of bilingual instruction in elementary schools and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in secondary schools. While they have been most helpful in targeting specific educational needs of students, the programs have also alienated both the students and their teachers from the social and academic mainstream of the school. Their "remedial program" label deprived many students of high expectations, higher aspirations, equality, and excellence in academic endeavors (Cummins, 1993; Lucas, 1993; National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994). The program fragmentation and student alienation have had an extremely negative impact on bilingual teachers as well; bilingual/minority teachers in the programs have generally been sent to the back of the "mainstream bus" of school reform and staff development. This isolation has created a culture of "us vs. them" between bilingual and mainstream teachers. It has engendered in bilingual teachers at best a superficial interest in school innovations and restructuring efforts; at worst, a deep rooted sense of disempowerment.

Although there have been many staff development opportunities for bilingual/ESL teachers, programs typically lack comprehensiveness and continuity. Fads come and go and bilingual teachers try them for a year or two, or simply adapt a few techniques or components of a model. Accountability has been rare. An exhaustive meta-analysis of effective programs for Latino students illustrates that throughout the country bilingual teacher classroom performance has rarely been considered, evaluated, or held accountable (Fashola, Slavin, Calderón, & Duran, 1996). However, blaming reluctant bilingual teachers for program ineffectiveness is incorrect, since most implementation efforts lack follow-up support to give teachers encouragement and constructive feedback on their progress.

Weaknesses in staff development and program implementation designs combine to produce student failure, and, reasonably, criticism of bilingual programs. Frequently programs offer only helpful hints or techniques, and possibly some new materials, rather than a plan for changing the basic core of a teacher's practice. Some programs simply bring in an expensive motivational speaker for a couple of hours to "motivate" teachers, without providing teachers with follow-up time for analysis, or for making connections to their daily practice.

Accountability has also taken a back seat to another sensitive factor in bilingual education: the shortage of bilingual teachers. Because schools are desperate to fill their bilingual teaching positions, the selection process, on-the-job preparation, and evaluation systems have failed to consider instructional quality and accountability.

Further, bilingual program staff development has suffered from what Apple (1993) calls "official knowledge" because programs are usually mediated by a complex political economy and the institutions they serve. They have been designed to influence only those functions sanctioned by these entities. This applies just as well to bilingual teacher preparation at many universities. Therefore, effective bilingual teacher pre- and inservice training is almost nil. The result is that bilingual teachers have been fighting alone for many years.

The Need to Restructure Professional Development

Effective instruction in bilingual/multicultural schools

requires that teachers combine a sophisticated knowledge of subject matter with a wide repertoire of teaching strategies, and with state-of-the-art knowledge about learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, curriculum, technology, assessment, and programs that work. Teachers also need to have ample knowledge of the students' language and sociocultural and developmental background, and to be as proficient as possible in two languages. Standard teacher-proof curriculum, traditional bilingual teaching, and typical staff development programs do not ensure that teachers will develop such skills. In addition to bilingual and mainstream teachers, counselors, resource specialists, and administrators must undertake tasks they have never before been called to accomplish. Yet, there is still much reluctance to change and to participate in a staff development program focusing on bilingual/ESL issues (Calderón, 1994a; 1994b; 1996a; 1996b; 1996c; Calderón & Carreón, 1994; De Villar, Faltis, & Cummins, 1994; González & Darling-Hammond, 1996; Development Associates, 1995).

Until now, schools have relegated language minority students to bilingual teachers only, taking the opportunity away from other teachers to grow professionally to meet the nation's educational needs. However, if *all* students are to succeed, *all* teachers in *all* schools must be given profound learning opportunities and support within a well-structured program, the resources to do their job effectively, and the tools to become multicultural professionals.

The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS, 1994) has suggested that schools need teachers who:

- Have a repertoire of approaches that upholds high expectations of all students, while affirming differences among students and teaching them to appreciate diversity.
- Are knowledgeable about issues of acculturation and second language acquisition, develop a greater understanding of all kinds of difference, and teach with multicultural materials that reflect a diversity of experiences and perspectives.
- Establish the classroom as a safe place to explore issues of difference and prejudice, and have the capacity to work together across differences of race and ethnicity, and work well with a variety of individuals and groups.

Development of a New Model for Collaborative Personal and Professional Growth

Researchers at the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk (CRESPAR) have conducted several studies of staff development for teachers working with language minority students to determine the following information: how teachers can be helped to tap into their abilities and have an optimum impact on the positive schooling of their students; why some teachers persist, despite fragmentation, isolation, and disempowerment; and what support systems are effective for mainstream teachers new to language minority contexts, and for minority teachers who have always been in language minority contexts.

Mainstream and bilingual/minority teachers were studied before, during, and after participation in staff development programs to measure changes in them and in their impact on students. The evaluation tools and processes used by CRESPAR's studies, which can also be used by schools as they pursue their own staff development reforms, include: (1) the teachers' and principals' analysis of their students' ethnographies of the culture of their classrooms; (2) the teachers' own analysis of their teaching through their peer coaches' ethnographies; and (3) ways to construct collaborative meaning to a pedagogy through a process created by CRESPAR: Teachers' Learning Communities (TLCs).

The results of CRESPAR's studies have provided insights into ways of bringing instruction, cultural relevancy, and equitable power relations into staff development programs. Goals for a staff development program at a school site typically include the following (Calderón, 1994a; 1994b; 1996a; 1996b; 1996c):

- High expectations and an attractive engaging program with a demanding curriculum for the whole faculty.
- A focus on research-based instructional programs.
- A learning community that provides opportunities for exploration of teachers' beliefs where they can feel safe to take risks.
- Knowledge and valuing of other teachers, the students, their families, and communities, to promote cultural empowerment, stronger teacher-student bonds, and eradication of the "us vs. them" tradition of bilingual and mainstream teachers.
- Bilingual proficiency through opportunities for teachers to become proficient in the students' target language(s) in order to teach the language or academic courses in it, or to learn another language.
- Self-assessment by teachers through their creation of a personal improvement plan and development of criteria for measuring their own professional growth, with the goal of replacing the traditional teacher appraisals by administrators.
- Peer assistance when needed: coaching, collaborative learning, workshops, and observations of other teachers.
- Development of human relations/cross-cultural communication skills (e.g., to enhance the talents of team teachers in two-way bilingual programs; and to dispel such myths as getting along with others is easy, conflict is bad and should be avoided at all costs, it is only necessary to interact with people one likes, and racism and bigotry do not exist in this school).
- Experiences in cross-cultural classrooms and in bilingual classrooms, including transitional, immersion, and dual language.

The Teachers' Learning Communities program that CRESPAR developed to accomplish these goals is based on the belief that every teacher can successfully participate in educational reforms. Combining implementation of instructional innovations with a professional development program, and building on teachers' personal and cultural assets,

TLCs appear to be a logical and practical way of addressing the learning needs of students and teachers. The principles of the TLC model are presented below as examples of components of a successful staff development program in multilingual multicultural schools.

Model Design

Part of a comprehensive staff development program, Teachers' Learning Communities are sessions in which teachers meet at a designated time during school to consider their own work, their relationships with each other, and general school issues. Teachers begin participating during their first inservice year so they are able to benefit from collaboration from the outset of their career. They help each other become change agents, peer coaches, classroom ethnographers, trainers of other teachers, and curriculum writers. TLCs help foster special types of collaborative and caring relationships between majority and minority beginning teachers and mentors that are perhaps their most important benefit from TLCs (Calderón, 1991; 1994a; 1994b).

General Group Activities

Among the activities that teachers do in TLCs are the following:

- Joint study of theory, philosophy, and research in each area of the innovation they are implementing.
- Demonstrations of the teaching strategies and feedback by colleagues within the TLC and organization of demonstration workshops for other teachers.
- Joint analysis of videotapes of teaching and student learning.
- Vision-mission-passion sessions for self-renewal.
- Joint assessment of student portfolios, overall progress, and analysis of standardized test scores.
- Exchanges with bilingual teachers from other schools, in other states, or in other countries, to learn more about bilingual instruction and further their bilingual skills.
- Joint analysis of equity-bias issues where teachers raise questions and solve problems.

Ethnographic Activities

One goal of the TLC sessions is to have teachers look at their daily routines in new ways. Thus, they are taught simple techniques to enable one teacher to do a mini-ethnography while another is teaching. Pairs of these "peer coaches," usually consisting of one monolingual and one bilingual teacher, create a script that describes each teacher's classroom activities over a period of 30 to 90 minutes. The scripts are written mostly in English for the sake of monolingual teachers, but, interestingly, most do not report problems in understanding class organization or key events in teaching/learning segments, even though the instruction is conducted in Spanish. Brought to a TLC for discussion, the scripts provide teachers with a tool for generating questions that prompts analysis and, possibly, reorganization of time, language status, and power relationships inherent in the participant roles. Among the issues considered are these:

- ***Overall Student Learning***. Are students mastering the academic, strategic learning, and linguistic skills taught? Are they improving? How much time do students spend drawing, writing, reading, using a computer, and engaging in off-task behavior? How is cooperative learning orchestrated? What role do students play in the cooperative construction of knowledge?
- ***Bilingual Instruction***. What is the optimal context of learning for language minority students? How do teachers construct "common knowledge" of what a two-way bilingual program should be? What is the valorization of particular subjects and practices in Spanish and English? Does Spanish or English receive more or equal status? What percentage of time is spent using Spanish and English? What is taught in each language? How do students react to each language? How well do heterogeneous teams function and what are the power structures?
- ***Instruction in Language Minority Schools***. What types of activities do teachers structure? How far do they deviate from traditional instruction? How are particular practices developed: time allotments, curriculum, teaching and learning strategies?
- ***Individual Teacher Practices***. How much time do teachers spend on explanations and corrections of tasks and procedures? Are they doing too much for the students, or are they letting them discover, invent, and construct new meanings? How can teachers be better motivated to inquire into their own instructional practices, attitudes about their students' linguistic and cultural background, and their own personal development needs and desires? How are teachers employing their talents and developing leadership skills?
- ***Team Teaching***. How are team teaching roles orchestrated? How does each member help or interfere with one another? What messages does the team convey to the students? Which teacher is on stage more? What does the team teacher offstage do? What are the power structures? How can the team be better balanced or improved?
- ***Teacher Relationships***. What are the power relationships between mainstream and minority teachers? How do mainstream and bilingual teachers develop long-lasting and meaningful partnerships in two-way bilingual contexts? How do teachers contribute to one another's talent, construction of knowledge about their students' instructional needs, and professional growth?

By creating a culture of inquiry through ethnography, professional learning becomes more focused and accelerated. With the tools of "teacher ethnography," the teams of monolingual and bilingual teachers can learn about their teaching by observing the students and their partner, and can draw closer together. Change becomes meaningful, relevant, and necessary. Although these professional development pro-

grams are still in development, studies have demonstrated that continuous learning by teachers is bringing about instructional program refinement and greater student gains (Calderón, 1996a; Slavin & Boykin, 1996).

Lessons from the New Model

The TLC structure at the school site gives teachers opportunities for meaningful peer coaching, and for collaborative reflection with the goal of fashioning new knowledge and beliefs about their students, their teaching, and their own learning. Preliminary evidence from peer coaching through classroom ethnographies indicates that this approach builds texts and contexts for teacher self-analysis, negotiation, and problem-solving. The ethnographies create a cycle of observation and analysis of concrete teaching tasks, reflection, readjustments, and a search for new knowledge.

The TLC structure also addresses knowledge and power relations between monolingual and bilingual teachers as schools continue to seek schoolwide reform. It promotes social relations and identities as peer teachers, and gives equal status to Latino and Anglo teachers. Each takes a turn as expert, novice, and equal peer. When this balance is achieved, teachers become empowered. The tensions between official discourses and minority discourses dissipate. Bilingual teachers contribute equally to school improvement, and more importantly, to student success.

The challenge of school professional development is to compensate for educators' lack of preparation for meeting the needs of diverse populations. The challenge goes beyond promoting "marginal teaching methodologies" and into creating new pedagogical norms and relationships. Collaborative relationships at the student, teacher, counselor, administrator, and ancillary school staff levels need to be deliberately established where caring, closeness, trust, and understanding can be built. Without such a new discourse of shared norms and shared expectations, educators cannot say they are doing their best to meet the needs of all students.

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